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Cease-Fire Developments

State Department review completed

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Cease-Fire Developments

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CAMBODIA

The Military Situation

Government afforts to clear Route 3 and recapture the town of Prey Totung some 15 miles south of Phnom Penh made little progress on 23 Juns as the Khmer Communists continued to put up stiff resistance. Government troops also made little headway on 23 June in their attempts to clear Route 6 northeast of the capital. The situation between Route 6 and the Mekong River continues to deteriorate. Government forces on 22 June abandoned the village of Phnom Del, leaving the government with only a few small outposts left all along the river's west bank. Efforts are being made to resecure that area. Meanwhile, the last of the eight battalions scheduled to clear Route 5 northwest of Phnom Penh are now in place and ready to begin clearing operations.

In other developments, the local press in Phnom Penh reports that the High Political Council has finally named Army Chief of Staff Major General Sosthene Pernandez to the newly created post of commander-in-chief of the armed forces. He will also remain as army chief of staff. It is not clear at this point just how much authority Pernandez will be able to exercise, particulary if Lon Nol remains as a preme commander.

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LAOS

Impanne on Nagotiations

The government's chief negotiator Pheng Phongsavan informed Communist envoy Phoumi Vongvichit on 22 June that the government had rejected his proposal that Pathet Lao forces be stationed on the outskirts of Vientiane and Luang Prabang. Phoumi allegadly replied that under these circumstances the negotiations were at an impasse and there was no reason for him to remain in Vientiane. Phong suggested, however, that Phoami meet with Prime Minister Souvanna today to discuss the matter further and the Communist envoy has agreed. According to the US charge, Phong is very depressed by Phoumi's refusal to compromise on key issues and his method of making one ultimatum after another.

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BOUTH VIETNAM

Military Activity Remains Low

No significant ground action has been reported during the past twenty-four hours, although both sides persist in the to improve local positions in a few areas. In the highlands, heavy Communist artillery fire and poor weather are impeding government efforts to retake ground west of Kontum City that earlier was lost to the North Vietnamese. In the delta, Communist gunners in Chuong Thian Province shelled government positions near the provincial capital of Vi Thanh. Military activity, however, has dropped sharply throughout the usually active delta region.

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Saigon-Viet Cong Talke

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The next regular session of the bilateral talks is scheduled for 28 June. The Thieu government's chief negotiator, Deputy Prime Minister Vien, is returning to Paris from Saigon for the session after reviewing South Vietnam's position with senior government officials.

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